

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. a medical device inventory management system, comprising:
  - a medical device defining an expiration date, in medical device packaging;
  - an RFID transponder affixed to the medical device packaging; the RFID transponder being initialized with an identification code;
  - an RFID reader defining a proximity distance at which an RFID transponder is readable, adapted to generate and receive wireless signals to and from an RFID transponder, thereby reading the identification number from the RFID transponder;
  - a computer having memory loaded with software;
  - such that when the medical device is in proximity to the RFID reader, the RFID reader interrogates the RFID transponder to read the identification code into the computer memory; and when the medical device is removed from proximity to the RFID reader, the RFID reader communicates the removal of that identification code to the computer memory; and if the medical device is again placed in proximity to the RFID reader, the RFID reader will again interrogate the RFID transponder to read the identification code into the computer memory;
  - wherein the computer software is adapted to periodically communicate all identification codes of medical device RFID transponders in proximity to the RFID reader to an inventory administrator; and to automatically communicate an alert to the inventory administrator if an inventory of medical devices is reduced below a preselected amount; and to automatically communicate an alert to the inventory administrator if a medical device has reached the expiration date or is within a preselected time period of the expiration date.

2. The medical device inventory management system of Claim 1, further comprising a bar-code reader.
3. The medical device inventory management system of Claim 1, further comprising a patient wristband reader.
4. The medical device inventory management system of Claim 1, wherein the medical device packaging is at least partially metal, wherein the RFID tag has a shape that maximizes the accuracy of the RFID reader.
5. The medical device inventory management system of Claim 1, wherein the medical device packaging further comprises a temperature sensor, and wherein the RFID reader is adapted to also interrogate the temperature sensor.